

Hillandale

News

No 208 February 1996



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Hillandale News

The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

Founded in 1919

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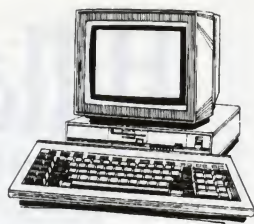
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EDITOR'S DESK



Changes

One of the major problems for us in the latter part of the twentieth century is that we live in a world of constant change. The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society is not immune to this. I have to announce two major changes in the operation of the Society. The first concerns the Booklist and the second concerns the venue of the monthly London Meetings. I give the details below.

Booklist

Don Moore has decided that he does not want to continue running the Booklist for us. I would like to put on record the Committee's grateful thanks to Don for his hard work in building up the Booklist's sales and thus generating a healthy contribution to the Society's finances. The Committee have appointed George Woolford to take over from Don. Readers should turn to page 472 in this issue for full details.

London Meetings Venue

The British Library, National Sound Archive have decided not to renew the lease on the property in which we currently hold our London Meetings. Consequently we have had to find alternative premises in which to hold our monthly meetings. We have been able to secure the use of the room we formerly met in before moving to the National Sound Archive. Readers are advised to read the notice on page 480 of this issue for full details. This new arrangement starts from the April meeting.

February Meeting

Jonathan Dobson, a recent graduate of the Royal Academy of Music and an enthusiastic collector of 78s, will be talking on *British Pianists*. Jonathan enthralled us the last time he talked with us when he let us hear some long lost Mrs Henry Wood recordings and I'm sure he has many surprises this month. All are welcome to come along.

March Meeting

Yours Truly will be talking about the *Scottish Music Hall*. If you wish to hear an alternative to the English Music Hall scene you are welcome to come along and sample for yourself.

Annual Subscriptions

The Treasurer has reminded me that these are now due. He requests that you all renew promptly and save us extra administration costs. Full details are on page 472 of this issue.

Congratulations

to our secretary, Suzanne Lewis on the birth of her daughter, Briony. We extend to her and the baby our best wishes.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in *Hillandale News* must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue**.

Hence the deadline for the **April 1996** issue will be **15th February 1996**.

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Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor.

RICHARD STRAUSS: THE MOZART RECORDINGS

by Dr Raymond Holden

Historical Overview

At other times I would remember the enchanting Residenztheater in which Mozart had conducted his *Idomeneo* and where, 120 years later, I was able to initiate a Mozart renaissance and particularly to interpret, with Possart as an inspired producer, *Così fan tutte*, previously so often misunderstood, to native and even foreign admirers.¹

Richard Strauss' self-proclaimed Mozart renaissance, and his widespread championing of Mozart in general, had its origins in his earliest years. As a young musician, Strauss was influenced by the musical environment in which he lived. Munich, during the latter half of the nineteenth century, witnessed a polarisation of musical thought: the Classicism of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, as espoused by Franz Lachner, and the Modernism of Wagner, represented by Hans von Bülow. Strauss' father, Franz, wanted his son to compose and perform in the tradition of the former. Himself a musical reactionary, Franz arranged for the young Strauss to have lessons with Lachner's colleague, Friedrich Wilhelm Meyer. This early grounding, with its direct links, through Lachner, to the tradition of Beethoven and Schubert, in concert with, as the eminent Strauss scholar, Franz Trenner, noted, '[the] knowledge and understanding of Mozart [that] came from the practices of his family and in particular his father',² awakened in Richard a love of Mozart that would remain with him for the rest of his life. From his letters to his friend, Ludwig Thuille, one can see the impact that Mozart had upon Strauss. The letter of 22 July 1879 is particularly rich in its praise of Mozart:

At the moment I'm very diligently playing the Mozart piano concertos from our Mozart edition,³ and I can tell you it's wonderful, it's giving me enormous

¹ Strauss responding to the announcement, by the Senior Burgomaster, of the establishment of a Richard Strauss scholarship at the University of Munich, in 1949. F. Trenner, 'Richard Strauss and Munich', *Tempo*, Summer 1964, p. 12.

² Interview with the author, Munich, 13 May 1992.

³ Strauss' use of the term, 'our Mozart edition', is a reference, not to an edition compiled by the Strauss family but, one assumes from the date of the letter, to the *Œuvres complètes* of Breitkopf & Härtel. Trenner notes:

enjoyment. The abundance of the ideas, the harmonic richness, and yet the sense of proportion, the marvellous, lovely, tender, delightful ideas themselves, the delicate accompaniment. Yet one can't play anything like that any more! All you get now is drivel; either twittering or brash roaring and crashing or sheer musical nonsense. While Mozart, with few means, says everything a listener could desire to be refreshed and truly entertained and edified, the others use all the means at their disposal to say absolutely nothing, or hardly anything. The world is crazy! To blaze with it! But I've made a vow, when I appear at an important concert for the first time, where I shall be well and sensitively accompanied, I will play a Mozart concerto.⁴

Strauss was true to his word and, at his début as a pianist with Hans von Bülow, on 18 October 1885, he was to play Mozart's Piano Concerto in C minor, K491 (composing his own cadenzas, now lost).⁵ Of the impending début, von Bülow wrote to the Berlin agent, Hermann Wolff, on 17 September 1885:

He [Strauss] is developing into an excellent musician in every way... he's going to make a success of the Mozart Concerto as of everything else the first time he tries.⁶

This performance took place in the first season of Strauss' tenure as *Hofmusikdirektor* and assistant to von Bülow at Meiningen (1885-6). The début was apparently a success⁷ and this would seem to have been the first of many distinguished, professional Mozart performances. Whilst there, he conducted Mozart's *Requiem* for the first time.⁸

In his first period at the Munich Court Opera (1886-9), where he held the post of *Musikdirektor* (third conductor), the second work he conducted was

⁴ Franz Strauss was one of the few private subscribers to the first edition of Mozart's collected works.' F. Trenner, 'Selections from the Strauss-Thuille Correspondence: A Glimpse of Strauss during His Formative Years', trans. Susan Gillespie, *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. B. Gilliam (Princeton, 1992), p. 236 note 124.

⁴ W. Schuh, *Richard Strauss: A Chronicle of the Early Years, 1864-1898*, trans. M. Whittall (Cambridge, 1982), p. 31.

⁵ Idem. [The cadenzas were composed at Munich in 1885, AV179. Schuh incorrectly gives the date of the concert as 20 October 1885.]

⁶ Ibid., p. 94.

⁷ Bülow recorded in a letter to the publisher, Eugen Spitzweg, 20 October 1885: 'His playing - like his conducting début - downright breathtaking.' Idem.

⁸ 6 December 1885. In preparation for this performance, Strauss revised Süßmayr's orchestration, removing the trombones from both the *Lacrimosa* and *Quam olim Abraham*. Letter to his father, 7 November 1885. R. Strauss, *Briefe an die Eltern 1882-1906*, ed. W. Schuh (Zürich, 1954), p. 69.

Così fan tutte,⁹ an opera that he championed throughout his life and, of which, in later years, he was to direct numerous performances at the Residenztheater in Munich. At Weimar, where Strauss was engaged as *Kapellmeister* (1889-94), he continued to develop his interest in these operas.¹⁰ Here, he conducted a Mozart symphony for the first time.¹¹ However, it was really his second period at the Munich Court Opera (1894-8) that focused attention on Strauss as a major Mozart interpreter.

At the Munich Opera, between 1894, when he was engaged as *Kapellmeister*, (becoming *Hofkapellmeister* on the retirement of Hermann Levi, in 1896), and 1898, Strauss conducted ninety-eight performances of Mozart. This was the period, referred to by him, that constituted a 'Mozart renaissance'. In 1896, Strauss collaborated with the *Intendant*, Ernst von Possart, for whom he wrote the melodrama, *Enoch Arden*, in a new production of *Don Giovanni*.¹² They also worked together on new productions of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*,¹³ *Così fan tutte*¹⁴ and *Die Zauberflöte*.¹⁵ These productions were influential in reawakening the interest of the public and the musical world in Mozart's operas, culminating in Munich being seen as a centre of Mozartian excellence. The theatrical and musical innovations, introduced by Strauss and Possart, have been referred to as the 'Munich Reforms'.

In an article written by Strauss in 1928, *Die Münchener Oper*, he relates his feelings of that time:

⁹ *Così fan tutte* was the only Mozart opera which Strauss conducted during his first Munich period: 12 & 17 November 1886 and 3 November 1887.

¹⁰ Strauss conducted: *Die Zauberflöte*, 22 September 1889; *Don Giovanni*, 11 February 1890, and *Bastien und Bastienne*, 7 January 1894.

¹¹ K551, 12 December 1891.

¹² Strauss conducted the première of the new production on 29 May 1896. He had conducted two performances of a previous production on 12 and 26 December 1895.

¹³ Premiered 3 February 1897.

¹⁴ Premiered 25 June 1897.

¹⁵ Premiered 30 April 1898. He had previously conducted four performances of an earlier production at Munich: 7 October 1894, 13 December 1894, 7 October 1895 and 27 January 1896. Willi Schuh writes: '*Die Zauberflöte* entered the Munich repertory on 1 May 1898.' W. Schuh, op. cit., p. 388. This is, of course, incorrect.

The Mozart Festivals, which I inaugurated together with Possart (*Figaro* was the only one taken by Levi), stand out among the truly wonderful memories of my life.¹⁶

In 1898, Strauss moved from Munich to Berlin, where he was first appointed *Hofkapellmeister* and, later, in 1908, *Generalmusikdirektor* at the Court Opera. The Court Opera was subject to the control of the Kaiser, whose views on opera and its production were conservative. Strauss wanted to incorporate the new theatrical techniques that had been pioneered in Munich into the productions at Berlin but his proposals were slow to be accepted. Musically, according to Kurt Wilhelm, Berlin was alive with talk of Strauss' interpretations of Mozart and, in particular, his playing of the harpsichord for the accompaniment of the recitatives.¹⁷ As *Generalmusikdirektor*, he took responsibility for the Berlin Hofkapelle's subscription concerts. At these, he conducted many performances of Mozart's orchestral works.

From 1919 to 1924 Strauss was *Leiter* (Director) of the Vienna State Opera. In 1920 the Salzburg Festival was established in its current form with a performance of *Jedermann*, a play by Strauss' operatic collaborator Hugo von Hofmannsthal. With Strauss, Max Reinhardt and others, Hofmannsthal turned the Salzburg Festival into the single most important celebration of Mozart's work in the modern concert calendar. Later, in 1922, Strauss, and his fellow *Leiter*, Franz Schalk, brought the Vienna State Opera to the Festival for performances of *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte*.¹⁸ Here, with the Vienna Philharmonic, he also conducted a number of concerts devoted to Mozart's orchestral works.¹⁹ At Salzburg, he directed his last performance as a Mozartian.²⁰

¹⁶ R. Strauss, 'Die Münchener Oper', *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, ed. W. Schuh (Zürich, 1949), p. 97.

¹⁷ (i) K. Wilhelm, *Richard Strauss: An Intimate Portrait*, trans. M. Whittall (London, 1989), p. 82.

(ii) Kurt Wilhelm met Strauss in 1945. *Ibid.*, p. 292-3.

¹⁸ *Don Giovanni* 14. 18. 22 & 23 August 1922. *Così fan tutte* 15 & 19 August 1922.

¹⁹ 20 August 1922, 30 July 1933, 7 August 1942 and 6 August 1943.

²⁰ 6 August 1943.

Strauss' performance aesthetic

In developing his Mozart style, Strauss set in place an aesthetic that incorporated the available source material and his understanding of the structures and interpretative practices of the eighteenth century. In particular, he manipulated sonata form and the Minuet and Trio and reassessed existing operatic trends as the basis for his argument. In his realization of the symphonies and operas, Strauss drew upon the autographs of K201/186a, K550 and *Don Giovanni*. Further, he contextualised Mozart's orchestral works within the greater Germanic symphonic tradition, programming them side-by-side with those of later composers. He regularly placed Mozart's works at the beginning of the programme, in order that they should be heard in, what he considered to be, the most beneficial light. He then constructed the remainder of the programme by balancing various formal structures.²¹

In his recordings of Mozart, Strauss' approach is pragmatic and literalist, looking to the score as the basis of his hermeneutic argument. His manipulation of sonata form and of the Minuet and Trio, in terms of tempo and dynamics, were an integral feature of his recordings of K543, K550 and K551. In relation to sonata form, Strauss clarified the architectonics of the structure with adjustments in tempi, reflecting the complementary dynamic, expression and articulation marks found in his annotated scores. He often differentiates between the first and second subjects by applying a 'meno mosso' at the arrival of the latter. This practice was strictly observed in each of the first movements of K543, K550 (1927 & 1928) and K551 and in the last movement of both of his recordings of K550. His tempi are as follows: K543 (first movement) $\text{♩}=52$ (bars 26-53) to $\text{♩}=48$ (bar 98); K550 (first movement, 1927) $\text{♩}=116$ to $\text{♩}=102$ (bar 44); K550 (first movement, 1928) $\text{♩}=116$ to $\text{♩}=112$; K550 (fourth movement, 1927) $\text{♩}=138$ to $\text{♩}=126$ (bar 71); K550 (fourth movement, 1928) $\text{♩}=132$ to $\text{♩}=120$ (bar 71); K551 (first movement) $\text{♩}=84-8$ to $\text{♩}=80$ (bar 56). However, in the Finales of K543 and K551, Strauss maintains the original tempo at the second subject. Interestingly, in both these movements, his

²¹ For example, at a concert in London, on 7 December 1897, Strauss programmed: Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*; his own *Tod und Verklärung* and *Till Eulenspiegel*, and excerpts from Wagner's operas.

tempo for the first movement's second subject is related to the tempo of the last movement. In K543, the tempo of the Finale is $\text{♩}=144$, the speed in crotchets at the first movement's second subject; while, in K551, the tempo of the last movement is $\text{♩}=80$, double the speed of the first movement's second subject. In slow movements, he also adopts a unified tempo for the first and second subjects, but increases the pulse at the bridge passage instead: K543 $\text{♩}=92$ to $\text{♩}=104$; K550 (1927) $\text{♩}=+100$ to $\text{♩}=104-12$; K550 (1928) $\text{♩}=100$ to $\text{♩}=104$; K551 $\text{♩}=84-8$ to $\text{♩}=92$. In the Minuet and Trio, Strauss, again, uses tempo as a means of structural demarcation, adopting a slower speed at the onset of the Trio: K543 $\text{♩}=58$ to $\text{♩}=50$; K550 (1927) $\text{♩}=60-3$ to $\text{♩}=56$; K550 (1928) $\text{♩}=60$ to $\text{♩}=56$; K551 $\text{♩}=46-51/2$ to $\text{♩}=50$. On a broader scale, he looks to the tempo relationships in the symphonic macrocosm, often integrating tempi to produce a cohesive whole. For example, in K543 he aligns the speed at the opening of the Introduction ($\text{♩}=96$ [$\text{♩}=48$]) to both that of the first movement's second subject ($\text{♩}=48$) and the Finale ($\text{♩}=144$). Moreover, his tempo at bar 25 (second half) of the Introduction ($\text{♩}=92$) is the speed of the second movement's first subject; while his pulse at bar 21 of the Introduction ($\text{♩}=104$) is the tempo of the bridge passage in the Andante.

The recordings

Strauss' recordings of Mozart were made over a period of three years: 1926 to 1928. Other than Beethoven's Symphonies Nos. 5 and 7,²² these were the only major symphonic recordings that Strauss made of a composer other than himself. During his conducting career, he directed performances of major symphonic works by many other leading composers but failed to record any of these. The recordings of his own works were considered, at the time and to this date, as definitive performances. Strauss, who, by the time of his Mozart recordings had reduced his conducting to a minimum, was not in need of any financial gains that these records may have realized. Therefore, his participation can only be viewed as a means by which to promote his Mozart

²² Koch 3-7115-2H1

style. Equally, he would have been aware of the permanency that recordings secured. This considered, he grasped the opportunity to set down his thoughts for future generations. Indeed, the recordings are testaments to Strauss' Mozart interpretation. The sound archivist, Peter Morse, notes that, in these recordings, Strauss:

...cut away a great deal of romantic excess which had accumulated during the nineteenth century and restored to Mozart's music the coolness and clarity of the original. In this he was ...one of the modern founders of the new orchestral style.²³

This considered approach, a cornerstone of Strauss' Mozart style, was commented upon by the British composer, Colin Matthews, who noted:

I well remember the first time I heard his recording of Mozart's G minor symphony, and compared it directly with a supposed modern master of Mozart (though only Strauss's junior by 30 years). There was no comparison, the later interpretation sounding merely mechanical and unimaginative.²⁴

Previously, Mozart's symphonic works were only poorly represented in recorded sound. At the time of Strauss' recordings, the only available versions of Mozart symphonies in the United Kingdom catalogues²⁵ were: K543, Felix Weingartner and the London Symphony Orchestra, 1925;²⁶ K551, no conductor listed, Symphony Orchestra, 1926;²⁷ K385, Hamilton Harty and the Hallé Orchestra, 1927;²⁸ K543, K550 & K551, Frieder Weissmann and the Berlin Staatskapelle, 1927-8;²⁹ K551, Sir Dan Godfrey and Symphony Orchestra, 1928.³⁰ Strauss was the first conductor to record Mozart's last

²³ P. Morse, 'Richard Strauss' Recordings: A Complete Discography', *Journal of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections*, (vol IX, no. 1) (USA, 1977), p. 16.

²⁴ C. Matthews, sleeve note: R. Strauss, *Eine Alpensinfonie* Op.64, R. Strauss, Bavarian Staatskapelle. EMI CDC 7546102.

²⁵ Material obtained from the incomplete listings held by the National Sound Archive, London. The record companies themselves were unable to provide any supplementary material.

²⁶ Columbia L1563-4-5.

²⁷ HMV D942-3-4-5.

²⁸ Columbia L1783-4-5.

²⁹ (i) K543, Parlophone E10392-3-4; (ii) K550, Parlophone E10366-7-8; (iii) K551, Parlophone E10433-4-5-6 (including the overture to *Idomeneo*).

³⁰ Columbia L1938-39-40-41.

three symphonies as a group. The orchestra for each of these sessions³¹ was the Berlin Staatskapelle, the ensemble with whom he conducted the majority of his Mozart symphonic performances.

As in the case of his performances of K543, K550 and K551, Strauss recorded the symphonies side-by-side with his own compositions. According to Morse, Strauss recorded K543³² in early 1926,³³ in the same session as *Ein Heldenleben*. He went on to record K551,³⁴ in the same sessions as *Tod und Verklärung* and selections from *Intermezzo* and *Der Rosenkavalier*, in late 1926. Immediately after these sessions, in early 1927, Strauss conducted his first recording of K550,³⁵ coupled with a re-recording of the above selection from *Intermezzo* and *Der Rosenkavalier*. He re-recorded K550³⁶ in early 1928, followed by his final Mozart recording, the overture to *Die Zauberflöte*, in mid 1928.³⁷

The recording of K543 was made using the Brunswick 'light-ray' method. This technique involved a mirror and a photoelectric cell. The method, with its greater acoustic sensitivity should have proved ideal for recording Mozart. Unfortunately, this sensitivity also recorded extraneous studio noises and, therefore, the sound is disappointing. Moreover, the orchestra is noticeably less well prepared than in any of Strauss' other commercial recordings. According to the matrix numbers, this symphony was

³¹ The term, 'session', in this article reflects Peter Morse's use of the word in his discography of Strauss.

³² Deutsche Grammophon Matrix 347bg-352bg; single side nos. B20640-1-2-3-4-5; Polydor 69833-69835; Heliodor LP re-issue 88022; Koch CD re-issue 3-7076-2H1.

³³ The exact dates of the recording sessions are not known. However, in Strauss' diaries, the word 'Grammophon' appears against the dates 28 March 1927, and 6, 11 & 17 December 1928. Possibly, these are references to recording sessions.

³⁴ Deutsche Grammophon Matrix 180bm-186bm; Polydor 69845-69848; US Brunswick 25017-25020; Koch CD re-issue 3-7076-2H1; Deutsche Grammophon CD re-issue DG 431874-2.

³⁵ Deutsche Grammophon Matrix 250bi-255bi; single side nos. B20858-20863; Polydor 69864-69866; Thomas L. Clear's vol. 1; LP re-issue TLC-2584; Koch CD re-issue 3-7076-2H1.

³⁶ Deutsche Grammophon Matrix 296be-302be; single side nos. B20974-20980; Polydor 69869-69872, Polydor re-issue 95442-95445; US Brunswick 90082-90085; Deutsche Grammophon LP re-issue 642.010; Heliodor LP re-issue 88022; Deutsche Grammophon LP re-issue sets 2721.070 & 2563.248; Koch 3-7119-2H1; Deutsche Grammophon CD re-issue DG 431874-2.

³⁷ Deutsche Grammophon Matrix 1406bml-1407bml; Polydor 66826; US Brunswick 90255; English Decca CA.8106; Heliodor LP re-issue 2548.736; Koch CD re-issue 3-7119-2H1; Deutsche Grammophon CD re-issue DG 431874-2.

recorded between Beethoven's Symphony No.7 and *Ein Heldenleben*. With commercial considerations of time and money firmly to the fore, one suspects that Strauss' rehearsal time was severely restricted. This becomes apparent by the string players' seemingly random use of portamenti, a technique not heard in Strauss' other recordings of Mozart.

The use of the portamento was popular, both in the readings of soloists and orchestras, during the last century and the early years of this century. By the 1930s, however, this technique began to fall from favour. Robert Philip writes:

One would expect orchestral players at the turn of the century to play with frequent portamento and sparing vibrato, but by the 1930s with more vibrato and less portamento.³⁸

Philip cites numerous examples of portamenti, noting its frequent use by British orchestras; specifically, in Elgar's 'Enigma' Variations. In works of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, however, Philip argues that 'fewer opportunities for portamento' present themselves; yet, 'quite frequent and prominent portamentos are nevertheless heard in British recordings of Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, and J.S. Bach from the 1920s'.³⁹ However, Sir Malcolm Sargent continued this practice as late as 1937. In his recording of K459,⁴⁰ with the London Symphony Orchestra and Artur Schnabel as soloist, his use of portamenti is striking. In the opening fourteen bars, and subsequent repetition of the material, the first violins, joined in bar 9 by the second violins, engage in portamenti. At the rising fifth - *f'* (bar 1 beat four) to *c'''* (bar 2 beat one) - Sargent uses a portamento as a means by which to balance the descending triplet semi-quavers at the end of bar 2.

In both Berlin and Vienna, the portamento continued to be used as late as the 1940s. In this regard, Philip's comments have a bearing on the existing climate and Strauss' reaction:

Compared with British orchestras, continental orchestras do not show quite such an extreme change in the use of portamento between the 1920s and the 1940s. ...but it is clear that prominent portamento was still part of the

³⁸ R. Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 179.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁴⁰ World Record Club SH142.

string style of Berlin and Vienna around 1930. ...The Orchestra of the Berlin State Opera plays in a similar style at this period, though sometimes with a more casual approach to portamento, like British orchestras of the late 1920s.⁴¹

The apparently indiscriminate use of portamenti by some of the players in Strauss' reading of K543, whilst still less than in other recordings of the period, along with a number of misreadings, suggests that the performers had insufficient time to cement their performance. This is not to say that this was simply a recording of a 'read-through', for it is too detailed for such a consideration but, it is the contention of the author, that this was not Strauss' ideal finished product. He seems to have taken steps to prevent such an eventuality repeating itself, for, in all future sessions involving a symphony by Mozart, he recorded that work, according to the matrix numbers, as the first, or only, item in the session.⁴² This ensured adequate rehearsal time to develop the playing according to his principles.⁴³

The feeling that the above recording is not quite the finished product is not repeated in Strauss' next Mozart recording: K551. Here the playing is of the most virtuosic kind. The tempo relationships match his articles on the performance of Mozart, and Classical works in general, and correspond to the markings found in his score. Whilst still using the light-ray method, the recorded sound is different from that of his first Mozart recording. The sound has a greater sense of focus and has less extraneous studio noise. Morse believes that the recording was made in a more confined space,⁴⁴ which the increased acoustic quality seems to verify. Due to the contrapuntal nature of this symphony's last movement, it was imperative that the recorded sound be well defined and one must therefore assume that Strauss was instrumental in securing this change of venue. Whilst the recorded sound of K543 was not as poor as that of the first of the two recordings of K550, it still lacked definition

⁴¹ R. Philip, op. cit., p191.

⁴² An exception to this practice was the recording of the overture to *Die Zauberflöte* which, according to the matrix numbers, was recorded after the last movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5.

⁴³ The British conductor, Sir John Pritchard, also felt that a Mozart symphony, when pitted against a major symphonic work by Strauss, should be the first item in the programme. Thus, according to Pritchard, ensuring a clarity of approach befitting the work's stature. Conversation with the author during the 1989 *Strauss-Mozart Festival* at the Royal Festival Hall, London.

⁴⁴ P. Morse, op. cit., p. 25.

and, as Strauss was most particular that the counterpoint in the last movement of K551 should sound as distinct as possible, noting this in one of his articles and employing a number of tempo and balance adjustments to meet this end,⁴⁵ he would have taken action, avoiding a repeat of the problems encountered in the recording of K543. The use of a more confined recording space would have been beneficial in achieving many of his objectives. As a result, the sound is comparable with that of the second recording of K550.

The questions surrounding the recording of K543, in terms of its preparedness, are overshadowed by those raised in relation to Strauss' two recordings of K550. He first recorded the work in 1927 and, again, a year later, in 1928.⁴⁶ These recordings remain an enigma to the student of recorded sound. No concrete reason has been put forward as to why he re-recorded the work. Morse considers this question but comes to no firm conclusions as to Strauss' motives.⁴⁷ The first recording would have been favoured by the record company, as it fits on to six sides of a 78 rpm gramophone set. Morse states that, due to the slower tempo of the last movement in the second version, the later recording had to be issued on seven sides and that no other set of this symphony was ever issued in this format.⁴⁸ The answer to this riddle may lie partly in the recording technique

⁴⁵ Strauss writes: 'The final fugue of the *Jupiter* symphony and the finale of Brahms's second symphony are cases in question. Mozart's final fugue belongs to the category of movements which Wagner wished to be taken 'as fast as possible': at the beginning of the second part after the development and at the beginning of the third part I retard strongly. In order to allow the fugue to retain a distinct shape at *presto* speed it is necessary to reduce the volume of the brass and timpani, and these reductions should be clearly marked in the score.' R. Strauss.

'Dirigentenverfahren mit klassischen Meisterwerken' from *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, trans. L.J.

Lawrence as 'On Conducting Classical Masterpieces' from *Recollections and Reflections*, ed. W. Schuh (London, 1953), pp. 45-50.

⁴⁶ The information regarding the date of the recording, accompanying the Deutsche Grammophon CD, 431874-2, seems to be incorrect. The date given on the sleeve note is 1927. However, according to Peter Morse, in the 1927 recording, the timing of the last movement was 4' 25", compared to 4' 45" in the 1928 version. The timing given on the CD is 4' 55". This considered, and allowing for the period of silence which follows each track on a CD, it seems likely that the recording, re-released by Deutsche Grammophon, is from 1928. The timings on the Koch International versions of these two recordings support this view: 1927, KOCH 3-7076-2HI [4' 25"]; 1928, KOCH 3-7119-2HI [4' 50"].

⁴⁷ P. Morse, op. cit., p. 29.

⁴⁸ Idem.

used in the 1927 recording and Strauss' expectations as to how these recordings would promote his Mozart style.

Morse notes that Deutsche Grammophon abandoned the use of the 'light-ray' method at the beginning of 1927. Immediately after his first recording of K550, Strauss re-recorded the excerpts from *Intermezzo* and *Der Rosenkavalier* with the same artists. This, combined with the knowledge that Deutsche Grammophon re-recorded a number of performances that had been made using the 'light-ray' method after the beginning of 1927, suggests that his first recording used this method, whilst the subsequent recording was made by the Western Electric microphone method. Acoustically, there is a clear difference between the two recordings. The first lacks clarity and definition, suggesting that, unlike K551, it was recorded in a large hall, whilst still using the 'light-ray' method, picking up the surrounding studio noise. The second has a greater sense of acoustic focus, which is best found in the orchestral balance in the opening bars of the first movement. In the 1928 recording, the celli and bass function is clearly defined: support for the melodic material found in the violins. In the earlier reading, the basses 'boom', sounding ponderous against Strauss' contoured melodic line. This lack of clarity abounds in the first recording, restricting the impact of his reading and, as such, denies the performance 'the coolness and clarity' that Morse noted as Strauss' hallmark. Equally, the tempo relationships found in the first recording are less well defined than in the second. It seems, therefore, that for Strauss, who used these recordings as means of propagating his Mozartian ideals, the only solution was to re-record the work.

In both the 1927 and 1928 recordings, Strauss chose the first version of K550. To this day, the version preferred by most conductors has always been the second, with the clarinets. He was cunning in his choice. Recorded sound, at that time, was primitive and to achieve maximum clarity, the adoption of the leaner first version, whilst underlining its inherent classicism, makes greater acoustic sense. Moreover, Strauss actively championed the lesser known aspects of Mozart's output; to record the lesser known first version of K550 is in step with his Mozart renaissance.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Following Strauss' recordings of Mozart's final three symphonies, Sir Thomas Beecham, an admirer of Strauss, also recorded the works. He, too, recorded K550, on 4 February and 2 September 1937 for EMI, in the original

His final Mozart recording was that of the overture to *Die Zauberflöte*. This was recorded as a 'filler' for his recording of Beethoven's Symphony No.5. As in the case of some of his other sessions, Strauss' recordings of Mozart were tonally related to the surrounding works: K543 and *Ein Heldenleben* are both in E flat major; K551 is in the key of the tonic major of *Tod und Verklärung*, while the overture to *Die Zauberflöte* is in the relative major of the first movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5. These relationships reflect a seminal feature of Strauss' performance aesthetic: the presentation of both his works and those of Mozart within a greater musical context.

To be continued

ARSC WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

A joint meeting of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC); the International Federation of Television Archives (IFTA) and the International Association of Sound Archives (IASA) was held in the USA at Washington DC from 15th to 22nd September 1995. As befitting such a worldwide gathering of specialists a multitude of subjects were covered. They included: the archives of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the operation of copyright throughout the world, the many language narrations of *Peter and the Wolf*, Charlie and His Orchestra disseminating World War II Nazi propaganda, a 1995 Caruso re-creation employing a vinyl source to which a modern orchestral accompaniment had been added, the training of radio archivists, a Vitaphone film project promising a goldmine of as yet unseen and unheard operatic shorts through to the pianistic skills of Jimmy Durante.

The farewell dinner and the awarding of the ARSC awards for excellence was held in the magnificent Great Hall of the Thomas Jefferson Building at the Library of Congress. Paul Campion and Rosy Runciman of Britain won the award for the best research in recorded classical music with their publication *Glyndebourne Recorded: Sixty Years of Recording, 1934-1994*. George Frow also from Britain won a vintage award with his *The Edison Cylinder Phonograph Companion*. The 1995 Lifetime Achievement Award went to Michel Ruppli of France for his extensive discographical publications.

Joe Pengelly

version, without the clarinets.

THE END OF AN ERA THE MARX TOY GRAMOPHONE

by Dave Cooper

Louis Marx was originally responsible for my interest in record players and records. For many of you this may not be a name that normally comes to mind! His toy factory at the Forest FFach Industrial Estate in Swansea was making a toy record player/gramophone and records for it towards the end of the 78 era circa late 1950's early 1960's. My parents bought me one for Christmas at about that time. It came in a cardboard box with cut out handles so when packed, I could carry it around.

The player was made out of moulded red plastic with a cream/off-white plastic turntable, arm and switch. (I understand they also came in blue and cream, but red was the most common.) The turntable was of course directly driven from a 'foreign' motor run by two batteries hidden beneath. In the early 1960's batteries were a disaster, leakage was common and it wasn't unusual for such a toy to be ruined by spent batteries seized up in their compartment.

The soundbox moulded as part of the arm used steel needles. The arm itself was made from two moulded pieces, the front having raised musical notes on it. It was detached when packed away and slotted into the base when in use. The base of the arm had a bayonet type fitting which has two purposes. One to keep the arm upright and steady and the other to pull a spring lever to disconnect the power to the motor when the needle is put into its rest. There is no internal horn and the sound makes its way through a grill in the base. The bottom of the base was made out of black plastic and can easily be levered off as necessary.

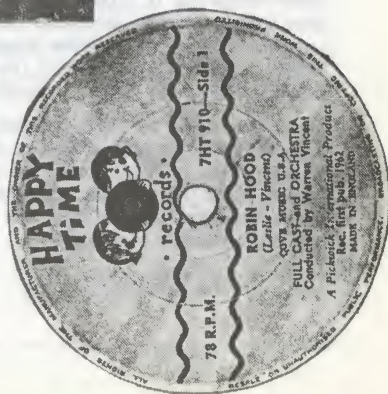
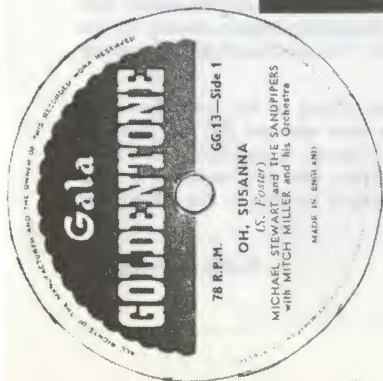
There have been many children's records produced over the years to complement each record company. The Marx Toy

Gramophone was no exception. It played 6-inch records called *Kidditunes* (with the catch phrase of 'fun and joy for girl and boy'.) They were pressed in black plastic with a yellow label and came in red and yellow sleeves. They were pretty innocuous records, mainly covering nursery rhymes and children's songs. Artists on this label were pretty unexciting too. However, this was the product made for use with this machine by the manufacturers. Of course, the record I was supplied with that vintage Christmas morning was a standard 45 rpm record - yes it played them too. It could also play *Victory*, *Edison Bell Radio* and other small 78s. The switch gave variable speed control from nought to about 90 rpm if your batteries were new.

There were other children's records still being made. *Happy Time 'Big 7'* (7-inch) 78s could be played on the Marx machine. These had a yellow label and came in multi coloured plastic or black plastic. Although supplied in coloured picture sleeves the artists and recordings were pretty bland. Pickwick seemed to be producing new titles for this label at least until 1962.

Gala Goldentone records were a different matter altogether. Also 6-inch records they eventually ran to a series of 48 discs. I collected them all at the time-all except GG 23 (*Little Red Riding Hood*) which had been withdrawn due to problems with the masters quite early on. A copy of this record must be extremely rare.

Goldentones were the obvious choice for Marx owners. They came in pretty coloured picture sleeves too and some had named artists on them. For the most part the orchestras were led by Mitch Miller (not a favourite of mine by the way) with unknown



singers such as Anne Lloyd, Gilbert Mack and the Sandpipers (Not of the hit *Guantanamera* fame). However there was also a recording roster including Roy Rogers and Dale Evans together and separately, Bing Crosby, Burl Ives, Danny Kaye, Jack Mercer and Mae Questel (Popeye and Olive Oyl to you!), plus original voices from the Flintstones, Yogi Bear etc. I don't know where the catalogue came from but I expect the recordings were made with permission from at least one American record company (Capitol and Decca sound possibles).

Sadly, *Goldentones* don't often turn up in good condition. You expect the sleeves to be missing from the majority of them. However, the records have suffered too. With steel needles being what they are and children being what *they* are, records are often worn and very scratched. After all, by then, you only got 12 needles in a packet from a toy shop and at 6d (old money) they weren't cheap. I remember myself as a child using what must have obviously been blunt needles scoring plastic out of the records as they played. I obviously wasn't on my own.

My original Marx machine lasted a number of years and I don't think it was thrown away in a broken state. I know I had to have a replacement motor fitted at one time, but generally things were made so much better then.

A couple of years ago I saw a Marx in a second hand store, still in its box. I pointed it out to our two boys and shuddered at the time at the asking price of £20. I didn't buy it and after some months when I decided I wanted it after all, I found it had just been sold. I found one at the N.E.C. (National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham) at Birmingham in May (still boxed, although not the same box), and I was delighted to buy it. (Incidentally, it's the first time I have restored a cardboard box!)

Are there any other Marx owners out there?

I would be pleased to hear from any other Marx owners in their second childhoods. Can anyone help me with details about the machine that played the Magic Record which is illustrated on page 465?

At Home in Devon

Saturday 16th December 1995 may well prove to be a red letter day for all those interested in recorded sound living in the Far West of the country. As a result of Paul Morris issuing an invitation in *Hillandale News*, No.207, December 1995 to an *At home in his' new' (1891) house* just over a dozen people gathered on what was a really bitter night in Paul's very large front room where the King and Queen of fires burned halfway up the chimney!

A fine collection of machines adorned the room ranging from an Amberola through a Triumph to a rather unusual Opera. There followed an hour or so of cylinders, many of them unusual. The selection included: *My Little Persian Rose* - Medley with the National Promenade Band; *I am a Roamer* with Peter Dawson; *Navago Indian Songs* with G. O'Hard; *Ah! Lo vedi* (Cavelleria Rusticana) with Avezza and Daddi; *Die Parade der Zinn Soldaten* with the J. Strauss Band; *She is the Belle of New York* with Harry Bluff (Pink Edison Bell Lambert); *Everything's at home except your wife* with W. Van Blunt (Everlasting 4-min); *Waiting for the Robert E. Lee* (Everlasting 2-min); *Los Chamaeos* (Mexican Blue Amberol); *The Nightwatchman's Christmas* with Billy Williams and *Irish and Scotch Medleys* with C. Daub.

This was followed by hot mince pies and wine. A long discussion then started to find out if there was sufficient interest to form a Group in the area. A nucleus of interested people emerged and four meetings were proposed for 1996: number one at a private residence near Exeter in March, number two in June to be held in Totnes, number three to be held in September, probably in the Exeter area and the final one to be held in December, again in the Exeter area. Many thanks to Paul for thinking of the idea for this get-together and for his excellent hospitality.

Keith Catchpole

VERTICAL-CUT DISC RECORDS

by Paul Collenette

Vertical-cut discs are a fascinating by way of phonography, which became a lost cause until recently, when the concept was revived by CDs. I have been gathering material for a listing of labels and production dates, which follows. I attempted to cover the world (unwisely!), but there are plenty of gaps in dates, and no doubt many other labels unknown to me. If any reader can add to this information, it would be most welcome.

As can be seen, the USA led the field, although there was a surprising number of vertical-cut discs published in the U.K. Up until 1916, the American market was filled almost exclusively by Victor, Columbia and Edison, with their domination of patents. Prospective entrants to the record market sought to circumvent this by using the vertical-cut system. Many of these insubstantial companies soon disappeared, either as a result of business failure, or by patent litigation by the big companies: those that did survive mostly went over to the lateral system when the master patents began to run out from about 1918.

I enlisted the willing help of the late Len Watts, who provided so much information that I was overwhelmed by France! While I was aware of Pathé's strong influence in France, I had no notion that there were about thirty other phono-cut disc labels there. So France deserves a separate article, and I will leave it out of this (with one exception).

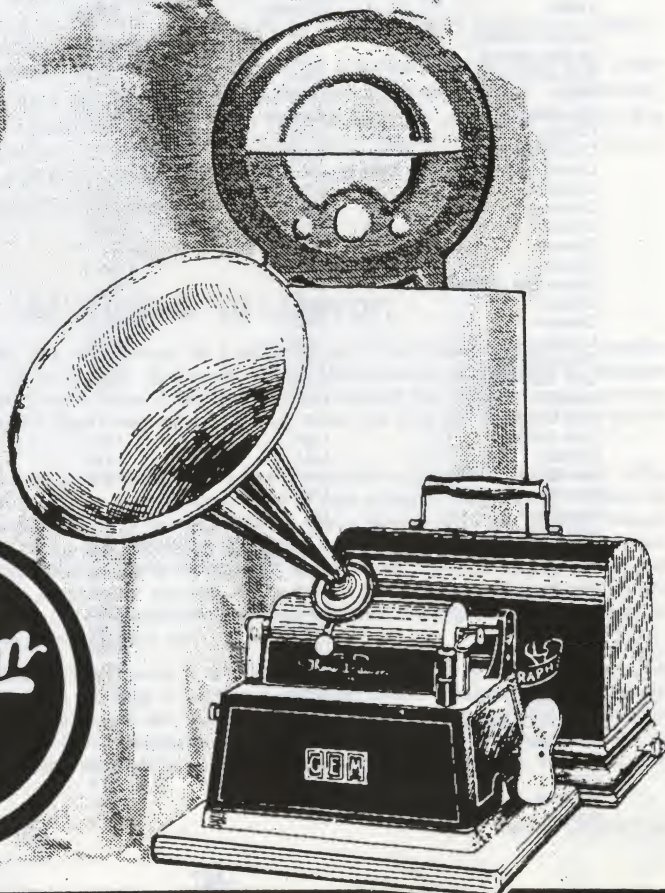
Label	Country	From	To
Aeolian-Vocalion	USA	1917	1919
All Star Record	USA	?	?
Angelophone	USA	1919	?
Beka	Germany	?	?
Brunswick	Canada	1916	1919?
Cadillac	USA	?	?
Chantal Saphir	Belgium	?	?
Clarion	UK	?	?
Crescent	USA	1917	1917?
Diamond	UK	1915	1918
Domino	USA	1917	1917
Ebonoid	UK	?	?
Edison	USA	1913	1929
Edison Bell Phona-Disc	UK	?	?
Elginola	USA	?	?
Emerson	USA	1916	1916
Empire	USA	1920	1920
Gennett/Starr	USA	1917	1919
Grey Gull	USA	1919	1920
Imperial	USA	?	?
Little Champion	UK	?	?
Lyric, Mozart	USA	1917	1919
Majestic	USA	1916	1917
Marathon	UK	1913	1914
McKinley	USA	?	?
Musogram	UK	?	?
Neophone	UK	1906	1908
Okeh, Phonola	USA, Canada	1918	1919
Operaphone	USA	1916	1916
Paramount, Puritan	USA	1916	1919
Paroket	USA	1916	1917
Pathé	France	1906	1932
Pathé	UK	1906	1927
Pathé	USA	1914	1923
Phono-Cut	USA	1917	1919?
Playerphone	USA	?	?
Princess Sapphire	USA	1917?	1920?
Remington	USA	?	?
Rex	USA	1913	1917?
Rishell	USA	1916	1919?
Schubert	USA	1916	?
World	UK	1919	1920

Brian Taylor Antiques



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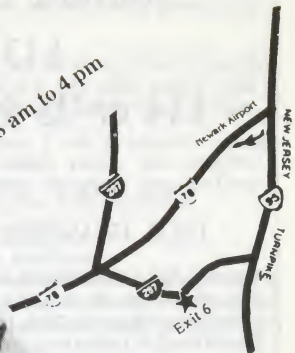
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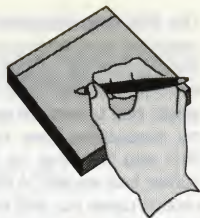
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LETTERS



Help Please!

Dear Mr Hamilton,

Having purchased a copy of the latest edition of *From Tinfoil to Stereo* for my bed-time good read, I got as far as chapter 3, page 19 where it says "On April 24th 1878, The Edison Speaking Phonograph Company was organised....." In the second paragraph it goes on to say "The five stockholders were: ..Painter, ..Hubbard, ..Bradley, ..Chever, and ..Roosevelt." As soon as I read this I remembered reading Professor Wile's introduction to the 1890 Convention of Local Phonograph Companies (pages viii and ix), where he says that these five men were the syndicate which took over the patent rights in January 1878, but that the ESPCo was organised in April by Applebaugh, Hayward, Corwell, Candle and Gref Jnr. The latter took over the rights from the syndicate members. Is this a 20 year gaffe on the part of Welch and Burt, or what? Had you spotted this? What is the correct position please?

Now, if I may trouble you further (as I don't know who else to ask), I have two copies of an Edison cylinder; both appear to be gold moulded because of the 'label' in white around the bevelled end. The 'label' details are:

Thomas A Edison PAT'D I. GILLETTE IN THE
SHADE OF THE OLD APPLE TREE 8958-2

Thomas A Edison PAT'D TENOR IN THE SHADE
OF THE OLD APPLE TREE 8958

26

The numbers below the title line are in raised handwriting on what's left of the playing surface. Both are announced as sung by Irving Gillette, and sound to me the same voice. I believe gold moulded cylinders were first released in January 1902, but it was not until July 1904 that the title was moulded onto the bevelled end.

If the first cylinder is the earliest, can I assume that

- the early gold moulded cylinders (1902-4) just had the number in raised writing at the end of the playing surface like their predecessors?
- in July 1904 the number was left where it was and the title added to the moulded edge?

c) at some time afterwards the number was also moved to the moulding?

d) at some time it was decided to stop showing the name of the artist?

If I am wrong, would you be kind enough to give the correct sequence, and in any case may I have a date for (c) and the date and reason for (d) please.

Lastly, are the numbers 2 and 26 mould or take or what?

Very many thanks for your excellent journal,

Yours sincerely,

John Taylor, Staines, Middlesex

(Unfortunately I'm no expert on cylinders and am unable to give you any accurate answers, however I'm sure our knowledgeable readers will be able to help you. Ed.)

Stephen Foster and Violet Elliott

Dear Chris,

I was delighted to read Dr Root's scholarly letter. Some time ago Dr Root was kind enough to send me a copy of his fine article *Rediscovering Stephen Collins Foster* which appeared in the 6th December 1993 issue of *AB Bookman's Weekly*. I take his criticism in the friendly spirit intended, and should like to respond in the same way.

Does the University of Pittsburgh have anything written by George Cooper, who was Foster's friend and occasional lyricist? He surely would have known whether Foster's 'drink problem' was as serious as we have come to believe. Certainly the opinions of those actively involved in the Temperance Movement are likely to be valueless. It is such a pity so many invaluable documents were lost, destroyed or 'edited' for family reasons. All we knew for certain is that he did drink and his marriage did fail. I have seen none of the films which purported to tell his story.

I see no reason why he could not have published his own songs. In Edwardian times, the desperately poor Carrie Jacobs Bond, rebuffed by publishers, founded her own Bond Shop in Chicago and became a rich woman. She had only three hits, the biggest being *A Perfect Day*. I am sure she would have insisted, had another published her songs, that her own name was shown as lyricist and/or composer on sheet music covers. I still maintain that Foster was naive in business matters: he could have become wealthy, even though songwriters had so little protection in his time.

My preference for Foster's 'concert' ballads, rather

than his 'Plantation' songs, is not influenced by racial considerations. I just love that kind of song! Finally, Dr Root is quite correct: *Beautiful Dreamer* was indeed published after his death.

May I also refer to Michael Walter's letter about Violet Elliott. I have her (on tape) singing E. J. Loder's *The Diver* (G&T 3-2161, 6171b, London 10/04), and she comes over as a pleasant contralto. Certainly not a bass! In the '1922 Zonophone catalogue she is known as Violet Elliott (Contralto) and eleven sides by her are listed, mostly of ballads. I too would like to know about her.

Yours sincerely,
Peter Cliffe, Hitchin, Hertfordshire

Stephen Foster

Dear Chris,
I was very interested to read the article on Stephen Foster (published in *Hillandale News*, No.206) because he manages to cross over, and his songs remain in the repertoire, of artists in both the folk world and the traditional jazz world.

In the New Orleans Jazz Revival of the 1940s the Bunk Johnson Band recorded *Swanee River* (The Old Folks at Home) on 14th May 1945, originally released on American Music 512 (along with a tune called *All The Whores Like The Way I Ride* which, for more polite audiences, got renamed by popular jazz bands as *The Girls Go Crazy 'bout the Way I Walk*, sadly it was not written by Foster). Three days later they recorded another Foster tune *My Old Kentucky Home* (AM 514). Both tracks have recently been reissued on CD (American Music AMCD 6).

The tunes became standard fare for traditional bands and I have produced both titles for LP production in recent years. I found Ken Colyer's Jazzmen using *Old Black Joe* as a tune and it is on LAKE LACD 19. Our own Chris Barber recorded *My Old Kentucky Home* for Pye in 1958 and I have just reissued it (LAKE LACD 55/56). A song which is ascribed to Foster is *Gentle Annie*, but I have been told that it was an old Danish folk tune and, in fact, was recorded by Papa Bue's Viking Jazzband in 1961 (Storyville SER 376). However, it enjoyed a lease of life on the UK folk scene having been recorded by Martyn Wyndham Read (Trailer LER 2028) who had learnt it as an orally transmitted folk song in Australia where it does contain a reference to New South Wales. (M. W. R. re-recorded it for one of my productions Fellside FE 027 about ten years later).

A singer currently enjoying a lot of popularity is Mary Black and it was her hearing of the American band,

The Red Clay Ramblers, singing *Hard Times* which made her start singing it and she recorded it with the Irish group De Dannan (CARA LP 0001). This ensured that one could hear it in every folk club the length and breadth of the U.K. It appeared on two of my productions: one by Bram Taylor (Fellside FE 057) and the other by Steve Turner (Fellside 058). Turner had wanted to record it when the Mary Black version came out and so he saved it until later. Both he and Bram Taylor sing a complete version: Mary Black only sang three verses. Steve Turner also recorded *The Glendy Burk* on his album and ended the track by playing a hornpipe which he called *Swanee River Hornpipe* (you've guessed it). I recently reissued it on a CD I released to celebrate our 100th album (Fellside FECB 100).

Another point which caught my eye was that "*Camperdown Races* was said to embody traces of folk song". There is a sea shanty called *The Banks of the Sacramento* which was collected in 1849 - *Camperdown Races* was published in 1850. Of course, it could have been in circulation long before it was officially published, but it does beg the question of which came first.

How many other popular music composers of that era can you still find in reasonably popular circulation today?

Paul Adams,
Fellside/LAKE Records, Workington, Cumbria

Disques Chantal

Dear Chris,
Reference to Armand Mangin's letter on page 435 of *Hillandale News* 207, December 1995. I have a copy of a booklet entitled *Chantal 1920-31, a search of old wax studies* by Albert Bettonville and Robert Pernet, duplicated in French A4-size, and quote my translation:

"Chantal started at Ghent, Belgium after the 1914-1918 war. First use of *Compagnie Belge Chantal* (the correct title) was 1920, for recorded and pressed discs of their selection 'Made in England' by The Aeolian Vocalion Co. Ltd. of London on the presses used for the supply of the English labels Aco G, Vocalion X, Homochord H, Beltona, Coliseum, etc. This English company was a subsidiary of the American Aeolian-Vocalion Co., Aeolian Hall, New York, founded in 1916.

"Chantal, concurrently with the British Vocalion Gramophone Co. Ltd. of Hayes, pressed at Ghent 'Fabriqué en Belgique par la Compagnie Vocalion-Chantal' the following series:

Broadcast 8" B-100, B-1000, B-2000 (1920-32)

Super Broadcast 10" B-2500, B-6000 (1928-32)

Apollo 10" label similar to Chantal, without a number series, but printed on the very edge (circa 1925)

Phonolita 10" "Disque à Auguille series 100 (circa 1931)."

Hoping this all helps someone, I am,

Yours sincerely,

Eddie Shaw, London EC1

Belgian Vocation/Chantal

Dear Chris,

Replying to Armand Mangin's letter in *Hillandale News* No.207, December 1995 I offer him the following information which may be of help.

On March 22nd 1928 a prospectus was issued for a new company already known as Vocation (Foreign) Ltd.

The first objective of this new business was to acquire from The Vocation Gramophone Co. Ltd. the entire assets, including the leasehold of the factory, plant, machinery, matrices (which comprised practically the whole of the vendor company's Australia catalogue of Vocation, Aco and Broadcast records), stock-in-trade and recording equipment of the Vocation Gramophone Co. Ltd.' factory and business in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, as a going concern as at 31st December 1927. The new company obtained the sole and exclusive right to manufacture and sell throughout the world (except the U.K., Irish Free State, Russia and North America) records labelled Broadcast, Aco and others of a similar type to the Broadcast 8" record (Unison?) then being made by the vendor company at its factory in Hayes, Middlesex.

Vocation (Foreign) Ltd. also acquired the benefit of negotiations, already concluded, granting the right to manufacture and sell Broadcast records under royalty in France and Belgium, guaranteeing a minimum sales figure of 1,250,000 records.

Vocation (Foreign) Ltd. also acquired certain rights on the Vocation record along with the benefit of a selling agency contract providing for a minimum of £2,000 per annum for a five period. Another acquisition was a contract for supplying West Africa with 1,000,000 records and finally the benefit of the current negotiations in hand for supply and manufacture of Broadcast records within the territories specified above. The right on certain Vocation and Broadcast gramophones was also acquired.

The Broadcast 8" discs had been on sale for just

nine months. The Australian factory had been in production since November 1927, and was capable of producing 12", 10" and 8" discs. 38 countries world-wide had already applied for the right to manufacture or sell Broadcast records. The directors of the Vocation Gramophone Co. Ltd. were appointed directors of Vocation (Foreign) Ltd., which paid £60,000 for the properties acquired. The lessee of the factory in Melbourne, Victoria was the Aeolian Manufacturing Co. Pty., Ltd. {a subsidiary of The Aeolian Co. (Australia) Ltd.}.

Clause 33 of the Company's Memorandum gave it the right to amalgamate with other companies carrying on a similar type of business, but I have no information mentioning Chantal.

By 1929 Vocation (Foreign) Ltd. had factories in France, Australia, Germany and Belgium. In 1930 the Australian factory was sold to a local company. The accounts of the German business up to September 1930 were expected to show a substantial loss. The Belgian company had suffered a loss of £2,233 in the 17 months of trading up to 31st December 1929.

The French company, at a meeting on 29th December, reported a loss of £509 up 31st May 1930. The French company had £52,122 invested in 'Associated Companies' in 1929.

W. H. Smith & Sons were the first sales agents. The Vocation (France) Company changed its name to S.A. des Disques Broadcast, with its office at 37 Boulevard Haussmann. Its new factory came into operation at the end of February 1929.

The German company was called Orchestrole Vocation A.G. in which both English Vocation companies had an interest. It was based at Clausophon A.G. (whose name was changed). It had acquired the Adler Phonograph A.G. business. The machine plant was in Thalheim and the record factory was in Berlin. The controlling interest remained in German hands. The company had close connections with the American Aeolian Company's German branch, Aeolian G.m.b.H. The German company began recording 18cm and 25cm discs in October 1928. Lindström A.G. and Polyphonwerke intended to band together to fight the Broadcast discs in Germany.

Bombay and Calcutta in India began to import Broadcast through Macmillan & Co. Ltd. in July 1928. In February 1929 consideration was given to building a factory. Discs from South Africa arrived around December 1928 and January 1929 and were sold by Jutta's. Italy had Broadcasts by March 1928. In December 1928, a Vocation representative surveyed a site in Spain with a view to building a

factory. The new 10" Broadcasts were introduced soon after.

The 12" Jean Noté *Herodiade* aria on a Chantal de Luxe matrix probably came from the French Vocalion business and pressed at Hayes for the Belgian Vocalion/Chantal business.

Yours sincerely,
Frank Andrews, Neasden, London NW10

Recordings by Thomas A. Edison

Dear Chris,

The recent discovery of several recordings by Edison among about 10,000 cylinders at West Orange has stirred collectors everywhere. Thanks to Stan North, Kent member, some of us at a recent London meeting have seen a 3-minute excerpt from a satellite television news from the U.S., and this included the voice of Edison on an 1888 wax cylinder, his earliest recording yet found and made when he was 41.

On a recent visit to London Steve Ramm filled in some details. It seems the cylinders were discovered by the Site Archivist, Jerry Fabris, and have been transferred by Adrian Consentini at the Rodgers and Hammerstein collection at the New York Public Library on Art Shifrin's cylinder player.

The earliest known surviving recording of Edison had been from 1906 when he was 59, but here was somebody sounding much more spry and looking forward to a round-the-world trip but confessing to being a 'little off' in his knowledge of geography. There are reportedly other wax records of him speaking, but yet no details. It is the opinion of Jerry Fabris that the purpose of the recording played was to demonstrate the technology to influential people, including a presidential candidate, James Gillespie Blaine.

Among other items to come to light was the cylinder from Sir Arthur Sullivan, yes, the one that turns up on nearly every historical compilation.

Personally, I find this exciting and would like to know more about it, as I hope we shall. In this way we might learn what became of some of the distinguished recordings it is claimed that Gouraud made at Little Menlo or at the Crystal Palace nearby: the Prince and Princess of Wales for two instances, other European royalty, those scientists and all the cylinders made at the Handel Festival of 1888 of *Israel in Egypt*.

More news on these fresh finds would be welcomed by all of us.

Yours sincerely,
George Frow, Sevenoaks, Kent

Orchorsol Gramophones

Dear Chris,

The timely arrival of *Hillandale News* promptly reminded me that I had not yet sent you details received concerning my enquiry about Orchorsol gramophones.

Readers will be aware of the details published in the June issue on page 311, supplied by Frank Andrews. The enclosed photocopies of adverts extolling the virtues of 'The Greatest of all Gramophones' - The New Orchorsol confirm the original registration address of the 'crying baby face' trademark. I must thank Frank James for locating these in his copies of *The Gramophone* of December 1926 and December 1927.

Frank points out that Orchorsol was a superior rival to EMG at this time, and was winner of the Gold Medal Gramophone Congress in London in 1924 and 1925. It had passed its peak by 1930.

He also suggests that the machine I discussed and showed in photographs in the April issue was probably a 1929 model made up from remaining stocks of parts; one pointer being the soundbox, which was for the Orchorsol portable and not a cabinet model. I should point out that in the original photograph I supplied there is no evidence of the 'piston weight adjuster' and I now fear this was missing from the machine I inspected.

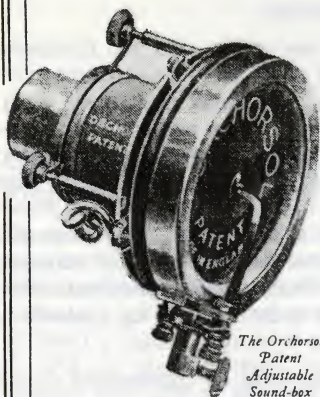
This 'inconspicuous' device 'operating against compensating helical springs contained in a miniature cylinder' in effect seems to have removed the weight from the hand-cut wooden tone arm and contributed to the 'perfect needle-track alignment.'

The three milled screws on the soundbox as I suggested could be 'manipulated to obtain the very best from your gramophone with the old or new recordings.'

The most amazing of all the claims made for this gramophone which 'alone re-voices the living tone' is that 'your records are guaranteed for ever against wear'. It is perhaps lucky indeed that Orchorsol vanished before they were inundated with users who challenged this impossible claim.

Yours sincerely,
Mark Gray, Hyndland, Glasgow

{Perhaps it was the sheer volume of customers claiming recompense under the guarantee that sank the company! I am sorry there is only room to print one of the adverts from *The Gramophone* you sent me. Ed.}



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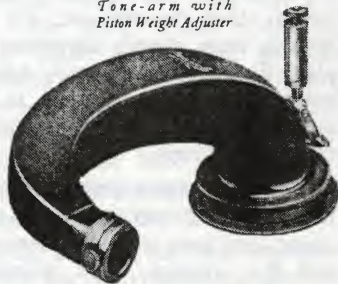
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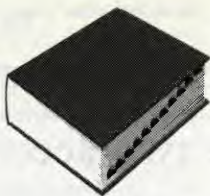
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REVIEW



NORWEGIAN DISCOGRAPHY No.11, Beka-Parlophon, Öivind Lunde.

**Compiled by Tom Valle and
Arild Bratteland**

This discography covers the span of Beka and Parlophon issues in Norway. The only Norwegian Bekas were made in Kristiania (Oslo today) in November 1919, and were largely directed at the local market. Parlophon on the other hand appeared there in 1930, some being recorded in Berlin (78200 matrix series) and some in Stockholm (78500 matrix series), but in Oslo only in February 1931 (78534-78554). The 41,000 Parlophon series had 19 American Okeh issues to swell the first numbers. Although the last Berlin recordings were made in April 1933, these did not appear on Parlophon, as the Norwegian label ceased to exist in the summer of 1933, but some came out on Odeon. Until discontinued, the Parlophon records were always advertised as Parlophon Electric, a sales ploy typical of the time. Full attention is given to catalogue, matrix numbers and provenance of each entry when known.

Ever-present Gloria artistes such as Bund, Bela, Dobrindt and Lorand appear in the pages, and there are brief sections of opera and the unusual. Does anyone perform Kienzl's *Der Evangelimann* (1895) these days? The versatile Norwegian light baritone Öivind Lunde featured on several Lindström and other labels at this time and also on Norwegian Rex (Book No.3 of this series) and unusually during the difficult times of

1929-30 he kept to his main work as an engine driver and when he quit singing in 1938 with several hundreds of sides to his credit, he left these to the Norwegian Musical Collection.

All through this series Valle and Bratteland have offered a well laid-out discography with index/indices and liberal illustrations of labels and from literature and shop hand-outs of the day, as well as copies of recording ledger sheets, and they acknowledge help in a difficult research area from Herr Hansfried Sieben of Düsseldorf. They have also traced material once held by old company employees. This is a well-researched compilation and is recommended for students of these labels.

The compilers must be commended on the standard of the series.

This publication is available from Tom Valle, [redacted] Oslo, Norway, **Price £12** post paid (Size 12½" x 8½", 82 pages).

George Frow

Self and wife intend visiting the U.K. and Europe during July/August 1996. We would like to meet and stay for 2/3 days at a time where possible with collectors who have similar interests. In exchange I offer gramophone parts, needle tins, 78rpm records (mostly rock & roll), cash contribution or reciprocating the favour when you visit South Africa.

Please write:

Vernon Alston,

**Cotswold,
Port Elizabeth 6045,
Republic of South Africa.**

REVIEW



Gigli in Song - Nimbus CD NI 7874 **Pinza - Nimbus CD NI 7875**

These two discs arrived just too late for me to write reviews for the December issue of *Hillandale News* and to urge that they would make jolly good Christmas presents. Cries of "What a shame!" - for what could be nicer to find in your stocking on Christmas morning that CDs of the best of the great Italian tenor Beniamino Gigli in song and the best of the operatic bass Ezio Pinza in some of his greatest rôles? However, even if it is too late to ask Santa for these two Nimbus CDs, perhaps a few strong hints for birthday presents...or you could even go out and buy them for yourself!

The discs have each been produced by Norman White using the Nimbus company's new acoustic gramophone described by Miles Mallinson in *Hillandale News* No.191, April 1993. The latest digital technology was used to make the recordings.

I do not know where Nimbus find their originals, but I wish I had access to the source. First of all, I played the old favourite, *Mattinata* by Leoncavallo on track 16 of the CD, and found myself enjoying what has become a rather hackneyed old war-horse! Then, using an open horn gramophone and a fibre needle I played a clean copy of the same recording on HMV DA 1454 from my own collection and Signor Gigli sounded as if he was singing through a hail-storm. (Psst! Anyone want to buy a slightly used copy of DA 1457?!)

I have to admit that I am not a great fan of Gigli but the standard of the transfers on

this CD went a long way towards softening my opinion. But although there is no question of the quality of the transfers on these two CDs, it has been suggested that perhaps the Nimbus system works better with acoustic recordings. But my view is that early electric recordings - perhaps up to the mid 1930s - also transfer well. I am, it has to be admitted, less enamoured of the later recordings in the series.

The Gigli CD provides a cross-section of the singer's recorded output from the mid 1920s until the early 1940s, effectively his years of triumph, after he succeeded Caruso as the world's most popular Italian tenor and before he was denied to much of the musical world by war.

The accompanying booklet was written by another tenor, the Kent-based singer Nigel Douglas, who of course was the Society's guest at the London Meeting in September. He writes from experience of seeing Gigli perform live at a concert just after the war. The great man was nearing sixty, but he could still enthral an audience of 5,000 in the cavernous Royal Albert Hall, and listening to some of the 22 tracks on this CD it is not difficult to see why.

The other CD under review features 20 tracks by Ezio Pinza. "Ah", you may say, "the man who sang *Some Enchanting Evening* in *South Pacific*" But as John Steane points out in the accompanying booklet, Pinza was first and foremost a star of opera, singing at the New York Metropolitan Theatre between 1926 and 1948 - a total of 637 performances there with a further 241 on the theatre company's tours.

The Pinza CD covers a narrower time-band than the Gigli disc, with recordings only from his earliest, published in 1923, until 1930. But it is fair to say that they give a good representation of his repertoire, particularly his singing of Don Giovanni - a controversial piece of casting of a bass in a baritone rôle - at the time.

I was particularly pleased to see the inclusion of two arias from Halevy's *La Juive*, recorded in 1923 and 1924: *Si la rigueur* and *Vous qui du Dieu vivant*. These magnificent twelve-inch acoustic recordings were deleted from the catalogue with the advent of electric recordings and were replaced by "improved" versions - on ten-inch Red label - only in 1929. Other delights on this disc include a masterful version of Sarastro's aria *O Isis und Osiris* from *Die Zauberflöte* and the splendid 1927 rendition of *Tambour-major tout galonné* from *Le Caïd* by Thomas.

It's difficult to find fault with either of these CDs under review. The tracks are well chosen and representative and the accompanying booklets are well illustrated and informative and have useful discographical details.

There were a couple of minor niggles on the Pinza disc: I spotted a couple of typographical errors in the booklet which should have

been picked up by more diligent proof-reading, and I would have liked to have seen the inclusion of a track from the 1939 recording of Verdi's *Requiem* - perhaps part of the *Dies Irae* or the *Domine Jesu* (HMV DB 3876-81). This would also have increased the time span on the CD's coverage. Despite these minor complaints, I would have no hesitation in recommending this CD to anyone who loves fine singing.

These CDs *Gigli in Song*, **Nimbus NI 7874** and *Pinza*, **Nimbus NI 7875** can be obtained from most good classical record stores at around **£9.99** each. A full catalogue of this series is available from Nimbus Records Limited, Wyastone Leys, Monmouth NP5 3SR.

Colin Johnson

Forthcoming Meetings in London

In February and March the London Meetings are held at the National Sound Archive, 29 Exhibition Road, South Kensington, on the following Thursday evenings promptly at **6.45pm**. Members' attention is drawn to the London Meetings Notice on page 100 of issue 188 (October 1992).

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| February 15th | Jonathan Dobson will talk on <i>British Pianists</i> and will give many interesting aural illustrations. |
| March 21st | Chris Hamilton will talk about <i>Scottish Music Hall</i> |

From the April Meeting onwards the date, time and venue have been changed. The London Meetings will now take place in the **Parlour Room** at the **Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church Halls**, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EL at **7pm** on the **third Tuesday of the month**.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| April 16th | Frank Andrews - <i>We Have Our Own Records - Part 4</i> |
|-------------------|---|

REPORTS



London Meeting, November 16th 1995

It's not often that a presenter can combine a programme of music about the early car and a condensed history of the automobile industry into one programme, and Howard Hope did just this on November 16th; all present would have settled gladly for much more had room booking arrangements allowed. This was the history of motoring through music with 78 records as we prefer them - playing 'live'. As well as the records Howard Hope demonstrated a speaking toy of the 1930s, a recorded plastic string being pulled through an amplifying diaphragm box that said "That's Shell, that was".

The record items played were:

<i>In my merry Oldsmobile</i>	Jean Goldkette Orchestra
<i>He had to get under</i>	Harry Cove
<i>Henry's made a lady out of Lizzie</i>	Six Jumping Jacks
<i>Lizzie, the pre-war flivver</i>	Douglas Byng
<i>My little Austin Seven</i>	Clarkson Rose
<i>Village blacksmith owns the village now</i>	Arthur Fields
<i>University Motors Ltd., advert record</i>	Gillie Potter
<i>Motoring without tears</i>	L. du Garde Peache & Angela Baddeley
<i>I love the sound of motor horns</i>	Harry Reser
<i>Pedestrian's dilemma</i>	Leslie Sarony
<i>V-8 Blues</i>	Three Tobacco Tags
<i>London Transport</i>	John Tilley

A flexible record by Sir Malcolm Campbell failed to play, unfortunately.

Howard spoke with authority on the Ford in particular, having owned a Model T for many years, explaining the techniques of driving peculiar to the

model. This was an evening that showed that our own members can often give extremely enjoyable programmes.

A London Correspondent

London Meeting, December 21st 1995

Although so called, the Christmas meeting in London is never quite a free-for-all, there being a musical theme that participants are expected to meet, although not rigidly enforced. The theme this year was family connections, either the performers or in the title of the piece, and quite unexpectedly this brought out previously undetected ingenuity from the participants, and performances from some whose fame dated from the early days of the wireless. Among these were Mabel Constanduros and Michael Hogan, and Sandy Powell and his daughter, while man-and-wife Caryll and Mundy brought anything but domestic bliss. The Western Brothers (cousins really) advocated the *Old School Tie*, George Baker and his wife Olive Groves brought us to *Chu Chin Chow*, and even vegetables became involved in *A Marrow's a Banana's Father* by Tom Barrat and Billy Thompson, all in the cause of research, we understand. More seriously we heard from Robeson, Dawson, Evan Williams and Joan Hammond.

A varied evening and a chance to hear the unusual seems a happy way to close the Society's year, and we look forward to seeing S.E. members - lots of them - in 1996. Our London Chairman, George Woolford is now based in the east Midlands, and Tom Little will be taking over in his place.

A London Correspondent

Midlands Group Meeting, 18th November 1995

I accordance with our regular format we again split the entertainment for the evening into two programmes. The general theme of Big Band, Jazz, Swing and Dance Music applied to both programmes.

The amount of items brought for sale by various people was somewhat less than is usual, but Richard Taylor brought along a dozen china gramophones for sale. Most of these were soon snapped up in view of their scarcity these days.

Brian Smith called his programme *Big Band Miscellany* and treated us to a variety of British and American bands (some on tape and some on 78s). He commenced with an obvious favourite - the first part of the Benny Goodman version of *Sing, Sing, Sing*. He continued with ragtime and early dance rhythms from such as Art Hickman's Orchestra and the Wilbur Sweatman Orchestra. We progressed into the late 1920s with the showband styles of Paul Whiteman and Jack Hylton (*Button Up Your Overcoat* with fine trumpet solo by Jack Jackson). Then we were transported into the 1930s with *Organ Grinder's Swing* from the Jimmy Lunce Ford Band and examples from the 1940s such as Charlie Barnet's *Harlem Nocturne*. Brian concluded with part 2 of Benny Goodman's *Sing, Sing, Sing*.

The above is just a selection of the wide variety Brian was able to play for us and he was warmly received by the audience.

After the refreshment interval Wal Fowler continued the Big Band theme with his programme *Popular Jazz 1953-1961*. He played a carefully prepared tape of Jazz pieces that had entered the Hit Parade, mainly in the 1950s. Some lasted, perhaps for several weeks, while others lasted just one week. Bands played included Ray Anthony, Billy May, Humphrey Lyttleton, Ken Mackintosh, Ted Heath's 1953 performance of *Vanessa* and Johnny Dankworth's *Experiments with Mice* from June 1956.

A nice idea which went down well. Our thanks go to both presenters.

Geoff Howl

Northern Group Meeting at Leyland in November

Seventeen people turned up for the AGM, with apologies received from a further six persons. The Chairman, Miles Mallinson stated that it had been a very successful year for the Group with an increase in membership, which now stands at 31. reducing the meetings to five with a positive purpose to each meeting has certainly worked, with the average turnout being around twenty folk.

Highlights of the year were:

The George Formby talk at Wigan Pier, which got us off to a jolly good start.

The SteamBoat Portable Picnic on Windermere which was very popular.

The Concours D'Élégance at Barrow seems to be the last 'at home' meeting due to the increase in numbers attending.

Involvement by the members proved to be popular when they brought their favourite records to Armley Mills Museum, Leeds, but again this must be the last occasion which will take place at this venue due to the massive increase in their room charge.

The Committee were re-elected for another year, but Treasurer Paul Hebden has indicated that he wishes to step down next year. The Group's finances, although steady, must be increased due to increased running costs of the News Letter and other factors. An increase of the annual subscription to £5 was proposed along with an attendance charge for meetings of £2 and they were adopted unanimously.

The 1996 programme is as follows:

March 24th: Sheffield - see directions on next page. Illustrated talks by: Gordon Biting on *Caruso*, followed by Derek Parker on *Jazz on 78s*.

May 19th: Alston Hall near Preston - directions in next issue. Members' *Disc with a difference*.

July 21st: Portable Picnic - details later.

September 22nd: Alston Hall. A Talk on *Ciné sound systems over the years* has been provisionally arranged.

December 1st: Alston Hall. AGM followed by *Music Hall on record*.

We have been very kindly invited to use the Music Room at Alston Hall, for our meetings, by the Principal, Brian Leighton. The charge is very reasonable, being coffee before our meetings and afternoon tea after the meetings.

Following the AGM Miles Mallinson gave an illustrated lecture on *Hill and Dale Discs*, showing most of the variations of Pathé discs, Diamond Double Discs, Neophone, Clarion and the long-playing Marathon discs. All these discs were presented on a Pathé Oxford of 1910/11 owned by Miles. An Edison Chalet Diamond Disc Player, kindly loaned by Bill and Joan Ward, was then used to demonstrate the amazing quality of sound achieved by the Edison Diamond Disc system. A long playing Diamond Disc of 1927 was then shown but not played as in spite of being only 10" in diameter it played for 24 minutes!

Thanks to the ladies for providing the tea and goodies before the long journey home.

New members are welcome and should contact the secretary, Ann Mallinson, Tel: [REDACTED]

Ann Mallinson

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